

Meeting with Tim Armstrong and Scarlett Milward

18 July 2018, at Learn Sheffield

In attendance: Julie Chambers, Anne Snowdon, Tim Armstrong, Katie Monette, Scarlett Milward, Eva Juusola (notes)

Apologies: Stephen Betts, Laura Gillespie

Sheffield Support Grid

Background: The Sheffield Support Grid is a locally developed tool which is intended to help schools allocate support to children with SEN in a fair, consistent and transparent way. The grid is split into the four categories of SEN used in the SEND Code of Practice. Within each category, the grid describes five levels of need. For each category and level of need, the grid describes a package of provision. Schools are expected to use this as a guide for planning SEN support.

The issue: We discussed feedback from two SENCOs. One said that the LA wants to remove the EHCP from one of her students because they only score a level 3 on the support grid. However, the same SENCOs were told some time ago that none of their students should be ranked more than 3 on the grid because they are in mainstream and where they had scored above 3 they were told to reduce it. They were both very concerned about using the grid in this way as they felt the grid is not a comprehensive representation of the child and their needs and were very resistant to removing a child's EHCP based on a grid level rather than the needs of the child.

Work to be done: Tim said that work on exemplifying the grid is ongoing. There will be a launch event in October. The revised grid will be piloted over the coming year and should be fully embedded by September 2019.

Tim said that levels 1-3 describe needs that normally can be met from the school's delegated SEN budget, and these children should be on SEN support. In some cases, an EHCP will be appropriate, e.g. if a child is a level 3 in several areas of need. If a child who has EHCP plan attends a mainstream setting, then they would be expected to access locality-funded provision. Children on level 4 should be in a mainstream setting. This information needs to be communicated clearly to parents and school staff, including via the Local Offer.

Tim said that there are some children in mainstream settings who are at level 5 of the grid. All special schools currently place their pupils at level 5, but there is a need to moderate their needs against the grid. The grid should be used as a consistent base line of how a child's needs should be met that should then be specified to their individual needs.

Co-production Charter

Background: Parents met with Tim Armstrong, Ben Allchin and Scarlett Milward on 20th June 2018 to discuss a co-production charter. It was agreed that a general charter should be developed, and each group would have an appendix specific to their ways of working.

Update: We looked at the draft and discussed a number of amendments. Further comments should be emailed to Tim.

Review of community therapies

Background: Scarlett explained that this review covers SLT, Dietetics, Ryegate Psychology, OT and Physio.

A service specification for **SLT** needs to be developed. This will make it clearer what the service provides, when, for whom, and who commissions it. It should also lead to a more coordinated approach, e.g. same level of provision across the city, consider when and where therapy could be available in the community during school holidays.

The same will be done for **OT**, and will consider sensory interventions. Parents said it was confusing that the SLT services ran free parent workshops in collaboration with SPCF, but the OT service wanted to charge several hundred pounds for this.

ASD assessments: The average wait time for an assessment is around 17 weeks, but there are different queues for different assessments. Responsibility for ASD assessments in Sheffield currently sits with NHS England, however there are plans for this to pass to Sheffield CCG in the next financial year.

Community nursing: There is no general paediatric community nursing model in Sheffield provided by SCH. Scarlett said they were aware of some service duplication, and some children being involved with a number of different community nursing teams, e.g. some children have two nurses from different specialisms. More work is being considered to scope what provision is already available and a working group is being established to consider what needs to be done.

Work to be done: Scarlett will involve SPCF in the review. In the first instance, a service specification for SLT will be shared with SPCF.

Updates

Transition: The Preparing For Adulthood Programme Manager post has been appointed to. One of the first tasks will be to map out pathways and provision. There will be an evening event about health transitions in the autumn. Parents said it was important that the information from the event was made widely available via the Local Offer.

MyPlan: Tim is working on merging the templates for the MyPlan and the FCAF. Parents asked whether this meant that schools staff who are developing MyPlans would then be required to ask parents sensitive questions about their drug use or alcohol consumption, income levels etc. – this would be very inappropriate and could damage parent-staff relationships. Tim said that where information was not relevant then it doesn't need to be included. Training will be provided for all schools on the new MyPlan.

Health commissioning: A second head of commissioning has been appointed to support the CCG's children's portfolio.